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Rusk Scores Moscow, Prague on 'Spy' Arrest

From News Dispatches

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Secretary of State Dean Rusk was sharply critical yesterday of both the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia in connection with the arrest in Prague Oct. 31 of an American citizen accused of spying.

The American is Vladimir J. Kazan-Komarek. He was seized when his flight on a Soviet Aeroflot plane from Moscow to Paris was suddenly diverted to Prague because of alleged mechanical difficulties.

"We are pressing very hard for immediate consular access to this gentleman, who is an American citizen," Rusk told a news conference.

"We do not like the circumstances of this man's treatment. This is one of those things which can have an influence on bilateral relations between ourselves and Czechoslovakia, and we would prefer to see the matter settled expeditiously and in accord with general practice in matters of this sort."

The Secretary called it an extraordinary turn of events for an American invited to the Soviet Union for a travel agents' conference, as Kazan-Komarek was, to be deposited by a Soviet plane, without notice, in a nation where he is confronted with capital charges.

Kazan-Komarek, a naturalized American citizen, was born in Czechoslovakia. He is president of the Harvard Travel Service in Cambridge, Mass., and an authorized representative of Intourist, the Soviet travel agency.

"We feel that the Soviet Union, as well as the Czech government, should take a real interest in this problem

and help us to resolve it as quickly as possible," Rusk said.

In Moscow, the Soviet government informed the U.S. Embassy that the aircraft on which Kazan-Komarek was traveling was forced to land in Prague because of radar trouble that made it impossible for it to fly nonstop to Paris.

An Embassy spokesman said the Soviets claimed that Kazan-Komarek did not reappear for the takeoff and that the plane left without him since no one knew what had become of him.

In Prague, the Czech news agency Ceteka charged last night that Kazan-Komarek had organized and headed a 28-man spy ring in Czechoslovakia. It said that he was trained by a "foreign intelligence agency" and that the group he allegedly organized "carried on anti-state activities."

Ceteka also said the American, whom it identified as Vladamir Komarek, 40, had made a "comprehensive confession" after his arrest and that his criminal activities were fully proved in judicial proceedings.

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